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WILDC.A.T.S

COVERT ACTION TEAMS

ROBINSON • CHAREST • HUBBS

WILDC.A.T.S®

COVERT-ACTION-TEAMS

#15

STORY
JAMES ROBINSON

PENCILS
TRAVIS CHAREST

INKS
TROY HUBBS

LETTERS
Richard Starkings
AND COMICRAFT

COLORS
JOE CHIODO

COLOR ASSIST
MARTIN JIMENEZ

COVER BY
TRAVIS CHAREST AND SCOTT WILLIAMS

WILDC.A.T.S.® CREATED BY JIM LEE AND BRANDON CHOI

PROLOGUE

ASPEN. YESTERDAY.

SO...

...RENO, I'M RIGHT THINKING YOU WANT SOME TIME TO YOURSELF?

BEEN A WHILE SINCE I *KILLED* A DAEMONITE. FEEL LIKE HAVING MYSELF A LITTLE *HUNT!*

IF YOU WANT, YOU *GOT.* I DON'T NEED YOU FOR A WHILE. *ANY* OF YOU, FOR THAT MATTER. I'M GOING TO BE OUT OF CIRCULATION. I HAVE *BUSINESS.*

KAFKA

JACOB?

A GROUP OF CORPORATE HEADS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO *RUN* AN ENERGY COMMISION, ME INCLUDED.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT WANTS TO GET THE *BAD* ECOLOGICAL POLICIES BROUGHT ABOUT BY B'LIAL POSING AS DAN QUAYLE FIXED.

I'VE COME TO ASPEN TO *PREPARE,* BUT ANY OF YOU WHO WANT TO STAY AND JUST HIT THE SLOPES, THAT'S OKAY, *TOO.*

WELL, IF *YOU* DON'T NEED ME, I KNOW OF A POKER GAME IN *BARCELONA.*

AND I WELCOME THE CHANCE TO --

BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA

SONNUVA

AN ATTACK! GET--

AN ATTACK! GET--

DOWN!

BRAKH BRAKA

PHTPHTPHTP

BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM

LOSERS.

JACOB --

ARE WE ALL OKAY? VOODOO? IS SHE --

IT'S BAD, SIR.

JSA

PRIS TOOK SHOTS. SHE'S BREATHING, BUT ONLY JUST.

END OF PROLOGUE

BOSTON. TOMORROW.

THERE'S A *CONSPIRACY*...DAEMONITE KILLERS...ASSASSINATIONS OF U.S. CORPORATE HEADS.

YEAH, I *KNOW*, SOME OF THEM COULD MAYBE *DO* WITH A BULLET IN THE HEAD, BUT THAT'S NOT FOR *US* TO DECIDE.

US, IN THIS CASE, BEING THE *BLACK RAZORS*. THE GOVERNMENT WANTS THESE MEN PROTECTED. *WE* DO THE PROTECTING. *NO* QUESTIONS, JUST *ACTION*.

YOU KNOW...

...I'M A *MOVIE BUFF*. IT'S FUNNY, HOW IN THE MIDDLE OF *ALL* THIS -- THE DANGER, THE DEATH --

-- I KEEP THINKING OF *BILLY WILDER*. HOW THE FILMS HE DIRECTED SOMETIMES BEGAN WITH AN ACTOR'S *VOICE-OVER* NARRATION.

I JUST HOPE IN *MY* CASE IT'S LIKE *STALAG 17*, WHERE THE GUY NARRATING LIVES THROUGH TO THE *END* OF THE FILM...

...AND NOT *SUNSET BOULEVARD*...

...WHERE WILLIAM HOLDEN'S ***DEAD*** BEFORE THE FILM'S EVEN *STARTED.*

MY NAME'S ***BEN SANTINI.*** I'M THE NEW ***LEADER*** OF THE BLACK RAZORS. AND, *ERR*...THINGS HAVE LOOKED ***BETTER.***

TODAY.

THESE HITS. ALL *CORPORATE HEADS.*

HIGH POWERED, HIGH ROLLERS.

MOVERS SHAKERS.

REC
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AND SOMEONE'S *KILLING* THEM.

THESE INDUSTRIAL LEADERS ARE *VERY* IMPORTANT TO OUR *GOVERNMENT,* LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

WHICH *MEANS,* IN TURN...

...THEY'RE IMPORTANT TO *US.*

WHY *US*, YOU MAY BE ASKING YOURSELVES. WHAT ABOUT THE *F.B.I?* THE *C.I.A?* ONE OF THE *OTHER* SHADOW-SQUADS? WHY HAVEN'T *THEY* BEEN ORDERED TO SORT THIS OUT?

I'LL TELL YOU. BECAUSE OUR SOURCES REVEAL THIS IS *ALL* PART OF A *DAEMONITE* PLOT.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT, THOSE LOVABLE SCAMPS ARE *BACK.*

THE MURDERED MEN ARE ALL PART OF THE ENERGY COMMISSION THE GOVERNMENT'S CORRALLED.

OR AT LEAST THEY *WERE.*

THEIR HITS ARE OF TWO VARIETIES. SOME TAKE THE FORM OF A FULL-SCALE ASSAULT.

THAT'S BAD NEWS WHEN IT HAPPENS, BUT IT'S NOT SOMETHING WE CAN'T HANDLE. RIGHT?

THE *OTHER* WAY, THOUGH...

SWAT

...THE *OTHER* WAY THESE KILLINGS ARE HAPPENING MAY BE *MORE* OF A *CHALLENGE* TO PREVENT.

IT APPEARS THE ASSASSINS HAVE SOME KIND OF DAEMONITE *SHAPE-SHIFTER,* WHO TAKES THE FORM OF SOMEONE *CLOSE* TO THE TARGET. AN ASSISTANT, A COLLEAGUE, A LOVER, A WIFE, *WHATEVER.*

WAITS FOR THE RIGHT MOMENT. AND THEN SNAP, CRACKLE...*POP...*

...ONE *LESS* CORPORATE HEAD, ONE *MORE* DRAWER FILLED AT THE MORGUE.

EITHER WAY, THESE KILLINGS ARE *TROUBLE.* 'FACT, THE ONLY ONE, SO FAR, TO *SURVIVE* AN ATTACK WAS JACOB MARLOWE, OUR OLD... FRIEND.

AND WE CAN *GUESS* HOW HE MANAGED *THAT,* CAN'T WE? WE CAN GUESS *WHO* DRAGGED *HIS* SORRY, SMALL BUTT OUT OF THE FIRING LINE.

NOW THERE IS A THEORY FOR THE "WHY" OF THESE HITS. THAT ENERGY COMMISSION WAS FORMED TO FIX THE ECOLOGICAL MESS THE ALIEN QUAYLE CAUSED WHEN HE WAS IN POWER.

IT WOULD APPEAR THE DAEMONITES WANT THIS FIXING UN-FIXED. *PRONTO.*

WHICH MEANS WE ARE *ON CALL,* WAITING ON LEADS FROM OUR FIELD AGENTS.

ALL OF YOU, TAKE THE TIME... IN WHATEVER WAYS YOU DO...TO *PREPARE.* BUT NEVER, I REPEAT, *NEVER,* LOSE RADIO CONTACT WITH HOME BASE.

WHEN THE CALL TO SCRAMBLE *DOES* COME, PEOPLE, *BELIEVE* ME, IT *WILL* BE A SCRAMBLE.

...AND ONE FINAL... *PERSONAL* NOTE. I'D LIKE TO SAY HOW *HAPPY* I AM TO BE BACK HERE...

...WORKING WITH YOU.

"NO, *WE'RE* WORKING *FOR* YOU."

"...CRIPPLE..."

"...YOU *DON'T* DESERVE..."

"...*FIFTH* HORSE, *SECOND* RACE..."

"...SHOULD HAVE BEEN *ME...*"

"...*VERA* SHOULD BE IN TOWN. I COULD GRAB A *QUICKIE* WITH..."

"...*DON'T* TRUST HIM. SANTINI. NOT LIKE LYNCH. HE'LL GET US KILLED."

"HE'LL GET US KILLED..."

"...KILLED..."

"...DON'T *TRUST...*"

HOW DID IT GO?

THE BRIEFING?

OKAY, I GUESS MOST OF THEM DIDN'T SEEM TO GIVE A DAMN.

TIME SIR. IT TAKES TIME FOR A NEW LEADER TO WIN THE *TRUST* OF A TEAM LIKE THE BLACK RAZORS.

I MAY BE A *NEW* LEADER, TURNER, BUT I'M AN OLD MEMBER. WENT INTO COMBAT WITH THEM. GOT WOUNDED WITH THEM. THAT... I THOUGHT THAT WOULD COUNT FOR SOMETHING.

I'LL SAY IT AGAIN, SIR IT TAKES TIME.

BEN. NOT SIR.

AND TIME'S SOMETHING I *DON'T* HAVE. NOT IF THESE KILLERS DECIDE TO STRIKE *SOON.*

ANY WORD, COLBY? FROM OUR COVERT UNITS?

NO, BUT ONE OF THEM WILL COMMUNICATE. SOONER OR LATER...

"...ONE OF THEM *WILL* HEAR *SOMETHING.*"

CLEMENT DAY IS A WAITER. HE'S AN I.O DEEP COVER AGENT. HE'S --

SOMETIMES HE **FORGETS** WHO HE IS...**WHAT** HE IS. HE **KNOWS** HE'S WORKING IN A **CABAL**-OWNED, MONEY-LAUNDERING EATERY.

HE KNOWS HE SHOULD BE LISTENING FOR...WORD... OF **ANYTHING.**

AND TODAY, WHILE SERVING A BACK ROOM MEAL FOR THE OWNERS, HE THINKS HE MAY HAVE HEARD SOMETHING.

HE THINKS. HE ISN'T **SURE**, YET, BUT HE THINKS. **PERHAPS.** MAYBE.

ADAM FLEMING.

ARE WE *READY?* HELL *NO.* WE'VE GOTTEN *SOFT* SINCE LYNCH LEFT. NOT *TIGHT.* NOT *HARD.* NOT LIKE WE *USED* TO BE.

BEAU PARKER.

WHAT ABOUT BEN? DO YOU *THINK* HE CAN--

THE *NOT*-SO-*GREAT* SANTINI? HE *LIMPS* AROUND TRYING TO STEER THIS *SINKING* SHIP.

HE'LL *DROWN* US *ALL.*

THE NOT-SO-GREAT SANTINI. *HA. HAHA.*

DAWN WU.

I *KNOW,* LARRY. YEAH, YEAH, I *OWE* YOU TWO THOU', SURE. BUT I GOT A *TIP.* GREAT TIP. *THUNDER BAY* IN THE SECOND RACE.

DAAWWN. WE BEEN *DOWN* THIS PATH *BEFORE,* GIRL.

LARRY, COME *ON!* LOAN ME FOR *THAT.* THE HORSE WINS, WE'RE *SQUARE.*

BLAKE COLEMAN.

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME SEE *DANNY.* AT SUCH SUDDEN NOTICE 'N'ALL.

I *UNDERSTAND.* YOUR *JOB.* YOU NEVER KNOW *WHEN* YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TIME.

YEAH. MY JOB.

LUIS CISCO.

VERA, IT'S *LUIS.* YEAH. HAVE ME SOME *TIME.* THOUGHT WE MIGHT --

YEAH. *EXACTLY.* YOUR PLACE IN AN HOUR? I'M *THERE.*

ROSE GRADY.

I'M *SORRY,* MISS GRADY. THE CONDITION OF YOUR FATHER'S *ALZHEIMER'S* HAS WORSENED *CONSIDERABLY* IN THE PAST MONTHS.

I WISH I HAD *BETTER* NEWS. TRULY.

CAN I...

CAN I *SEE* HIM?

BEN SANTINI.

IT HURTS *STILL.* MY LEG.

A LOT. *ALWAYS.*

I SAW HIM *TODAY*, FATHER. A *PICTURE* OF HIM. THE *MAN* WHO *CRIPPLED* ME.

I *HATE* HIM, FATHER. I CAN *TASTE* MY HATE FOR HIM. LIKE THE *PAIN*, IT'S WITH ME *ALWAYS.* THAT'S WHY I'M *HERE.* I HAVE TO *KNOW* --

IS IT *WRONG* TO HATE SOMEONE LIKE I *DO*, FATHER?

IS IT A *SIN?*

THUNDER BAY. GO. GO. GO ON! GO ON, BOY! ***THUNDER BAAAYY!***

IF I'M GOING TO *LEAD* THEM... I HAVE TO BE *BETTER* THAN THEM. I HAVE TO BE *BRAVER* AND *STRONGER* AND... AND...

I FEEL LIKE PETER O'TOOLE IN *MURPHY'S WAR*...LIKE NO MATTER *WHAT* I DO, NO MATTER *HOW HARD* I TRY...

...SOMETHING IS GOING TO GO WRONG.

I *KNOW*, LARRY. I KNOW. THUNDER BAY FINISHED *FOURTH*. LOOK, WHAT I OWE YOU...*THIS* AND THE *OLD* DEBT... I'LL *PAY* YOU BY --

DAAWWN. *WHY* AM I LISTENING TO THIS? AM I *NUTS?*

I'LL *SEE* YOU... WHEN I *CAN*. KISS THE BOY FOR ME.

AND I'LL GET THE *ALIMONY* CHECK TO YOU BY WEEK'S END. I *PROMISE*.

I *KNOW* YOU WILL. YOU MAY HAVE BEEN A *BAD* HUSBAND, BUT YOU'RE A *GOOD* FATHER. I *KNOW* THAT.

SONYA, IT'S *LUIS*. YEAH. HAVE ME SOME *TIME*. THOUGHT WE MIGHT --

YEAH. *EXACTLY*. YOUR PLACE IN AN HOUR? I'M *THERE*.

HELLO, POP. IT'S *ME*. IT'S *ROSE*. I'M SORRY I'VE BEEN *AWAY* SO LONG.

HERE, LET ME FIX YOUR NAILS. FILE THEM *NICE*. YOU ALWAYS *DID* LIKE ME DOING THAT FOR YOU. YOU --

I'LL *ALWAYS* LOVE YOU, POP. ALWAYS AND *FOREVER*.

PHONE

THIS IS *DALEY*. LOOK, I CAN'T TALK FOR ***LONG***. I THINK THEY ***KNOW***...ABOUT ***ME***...BEING--

LISTEN, THE ***NEXT HIT***, I HEARD ***WHERE*** AND ***WHEN***. IT'S --

YOU ***GOT*** ALL THAT? OKAY, NOW FOR ***GOD'S SAKE*** GET A TEAM HERE TO ***GRAB*** ME. I'M IN ***DEEP***. I GOTTA GET ***AWAY*** 'FORE--

OH.

OHH.

KRRRRRRZZZ

TOTAL

PIN-UP BY
Travis Charest
and
Cam Smith

"SO..."

...WE *KNOW.* COST AN AGENT NAMED DALEY HIS *LIFE,* BUT WE KNOW. RAZORS, WE HAVE A *TARGET,* WE HAVE A *TIME...*

...AND WE HAVE TEN MINUTES TO *GET* THERE BEFORE BOTH TARGET AND TIME ARE *PAST TENSE.*

"ONE QUESTION."

"WHY IS SANTINI ARMORED UP?"

"WHY --"

"-- SANTINI --"

"-- THE GIMP ARMORED UP?"

"SHOULD BE *ME* STANDING THERE, THE LEADER."

BOSTON. WE ARRIVE IN TIME. I *THINK.* JUST.

DOWN! EVERYONE!

DANIELS! WHERE'S *DANIELS?!*

TARGETS *SIGHTED,* SIR...

...TARGETS *CONFIRMED!* THEY'RE *HERE.* THEY'RE--

I'M DANIELS! WHAT--

KRRAASH

OH MY--

CKRAKK

INCOMING!

ZZWTT

SLLT

KBMM

YOU!

YOU'RE--

NO!

GET --

NO WAY. DANIELS LIVES.

TOMORROW BECOMES TODAY BECOMES THE PRESENT BECOMES NOW.

NHH

AAHHH!

HOLD. HAVE T--

TNNK

BRAKA BRAKA BRAKA

BRAKA BRAKA

BRAKA BRAKA

BRAKA BRAKA

S'COMING...

...AT ME.

PULL. HAVE TO PULL...

...UP...

...AND...

...SWING!

SHOOOOOOOOOM

FLAG.

OLD GLORY.

NOT...

... SO...

... GLORIOUS.

RIPPING...

... FREE.

SECONDS...

... FROM --

THE HUMAN!

SKASSH

-- HE'S AS GOOD AS *DEALT* WITH.

THEY *BOTH* ROLLED OVER *THAT* TIME --

DON'T WORRY --

-- THIS SHIP...

...AND MY *INSIDES.*

I JUST HOPE MY TEAM IS FARING BETTER.

ZZZZZTT

I'M ON IT, BLAKE.

WATCH DANIELS!

SIR, GET --

CRUSH YOU. KIL --

H... H... H... H...

BLACKING... OUT... HAVE... TO...

...USE BLASTER!

HERE! HAVE SOME!

SSSSTTAAA

WHERE'S SANTINI?!

BEHIND... WATCH --

FIRE AT --

TYPICAL LEADER --

-- HE'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND --

ZZZTTT ZZZTTT

"-- THE MOMENT THE FIGHTING STARTS."

ALL RIGHT, DARTH! SHOW'S OVER.

LAND THIS BEF--

UNF!

WHUMP

BLAM BLAM

UHH!

TWO DOWN!

BUT THERE'S MORE AHEAD!

DANIELS! STAY PUT -- THERE'S STILL DANGER!

NNH!

SHOOM

DONE.

CAN'T PILOT THIS.

HAVE TO...

... JUMP.

OHHH...

NHHHH!

"... $@*#!!"

SHLOOOOSH

MY LEG IS *KILLING* ME.

I DID *TOO* MUCH. I *KNOW* THAT.

YEAH, MY LEG IS *MURDER.*

BUT I DON'T LET THEM SEE THE PAIN. NOT *MY* RAZORS.

I HAVE TO BE *STRONG.*

LIKE BRUCE WILLIS IN *DIE HARD*. LIKE BARBARA STANWYCK IN *STELLA DALLAS.*

HAVE YOU QUESTIONED ANY OF THEM, DAWN?

THEY WERE PROGRAMMED WITH SOME KIND OF ***AUTO SHUT OFF***...THEIR MINDS ***CEASED*** TO ***FUNCTION*** WHEN CAPTURED.

WE'RE ***STUCK*** WITH ***VEGETABLES?***

YES, SIR.

NOT QUITE --

-- ONE OF THEM WASN'T PROGRAMMED WELL ENOUGH. HE SHUT DOWN, SURE, LIKE THE OTHERS, BUT NOT BEFORE FLEMING GOT TO HIM. QUESTIONED HIM. DID IT WITH A CERTAIN... ***FLAIR.***

YEAH, I'LL BET. FLEMING'S GOT A LOT OF "FLAIR."

THE VICIOUS BASTARD.

SO, HE GOT SOME ***ANWERS*** BEFORE THE ASSASSIN WENT UNDER?

THE ***NEXT HIT.*** THE REASON THE DAEMONITE SHAPE-CHANGER WASN'T USED ***HERE*** WAS BECAUSE HE'S ***ALREADY*** INSTALLED HIMSELF IN PREPARATION FOR THE ***NEXT*** KILLING.

AN OIL EMIR. A MEETING BETWEEN HIM AND OTHER ENERGY LEADERS -- INCLUDING JACOB MARLOWE.

MARLOWE?

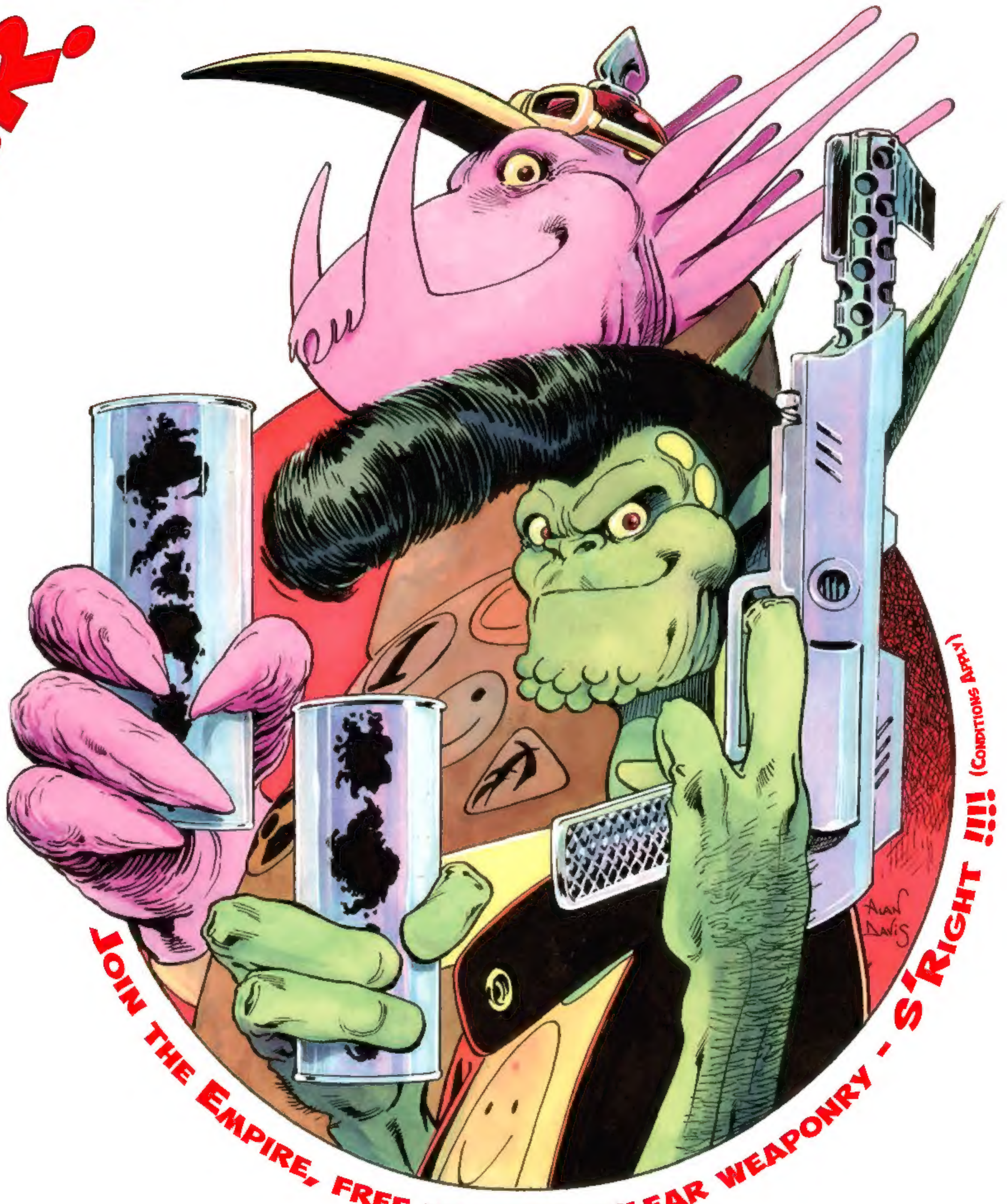
THAT'S THE THING, SIR. THE SHAPE-SHIFTER... THE GUISE HE'S TAKEN FOR THIS HIT... THE ASSASSIN DIDN'T KNOW WHICH ONE ***EXACTLY***... BUT HE DID KNOW... ***REVEAL...***

YES. ***WHAT?***

FOR THE ***NEXT KILLING.*** THE ASSASSIN'S POSING...

...AS ***ONE OF THE WILDC.A.T.S!***

D.R. & QUINCH



JOIN THE EMPIRE, FREE THERMONUCLEAR WEAPONRY - S'RIGHT !!!! (CONDITIONS APPLY)

K6 NW